# Jon Hall and Subjective Wellbeing part 3 - full post

*Posted on 21 October 2011*
Links to Part 1 and Part 2

In his presentation, Jon said that it is important to look at subjective wellbeing or happiness, along with more objective measures because the two can tell different stories about happiness and wellbeing.

Jon gave an example from a field called behavioural economics to demonstrate his point.

The example looked at unemployment and happiness and life partners. It showed you would be happiest when both you and your partner are employed - this is what you would probably expect. But the data showed that you would be unhappiest if you were unemployed but your partner was employed; rather than if both you and your partner were unemployed (as you may expect). One would assume this(both you and your partner unemployed) to be the least desirable situation in objective measures. This is because if at least your partner is employed, there is a source of income from employment versus no income if both you and your partner are unemployed.

| Happiest state of affairs | You | Your partner |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Employed | Employed |
| 2 | Employed | Unemployed |
| 3 | Unemployed | Unemployed |
| 4 | Unemployed | Employed |

Jon summarised that what's important for our happiness isn't just our situation but how we compare with others even if it is our partner.

How important do you think it is to look at happiness of people when measuring progress?

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**#1 DavidM**
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I find my expectations, play a big role on how i rate my well being, these expectations can be developed over a long time, and from a lot of processes and influences in my life.

It then influences how i react to the changing world around me and how I feel when the comparison with what I expected is not ideal or what others are doing in tha similar situation. I draw upon ideas of experiential learning and the process of judging and decision making to process the relevant data and make my choices when coping with the current situation. This does not stop me feeling good or bad at the result, and can only be as good as the references I draw upon. One could then infer that knowledge and education coupled with out experiences can provide a good base for understanding our situation and well being, and will change the way we see it.

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